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THE RELATIONS OF VERGIL AND HORACE WITH AUGUSTUS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD HIM

by

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THE GOVERNMENT OF AUGUSTUS

While the Roman world, dismayed by the murder of Caesar, stood aghast, and Antony succeeded in casting odium upon the liberators and in winning for himself the opportunity to play the monarch unrestrained, a youth of eighteen was pursuing his studies in Apollonia on the Adriatic. This young man, who during the first week of May, 44 B.C. entered the city so quietly to claim his inheritance,[1] and of whom Cicero said carelessly, "laudandum, adolescentem, ornandum, tollendum", was to prove a match for the cunning of a scheming world of experienced men and to force the Roman state, torn by the discord of opposing parties, to look to one man for her salvation. With a prudence and vigor worthy of a man well trained in the school of politics, he succeeded in forcing a dazed and wavering senate to grant him the consulship, and in freeing himself from the first obstacle in his path, the liberators, by joining forces with Antony. And when Antony fell at Actium, this young Octavian stood alone master of the Roman state.

Chateaubriand called Augustus "the incarnation of political common sense". He found himself at the head of a state economically, physically, and morally worn

1 Dio, XLV.5.2; Holmes, p.13

out by civil strife; but it was a people who, since the expulsion of the Tarquins, had held in reverence the name of Brutus and had abhorred the very name of king. And yet it was a people that by years of discord had shown itself to be no longer capable of self government in the strict sense of the word. Speaking of the battle of Philippi Dio says, "And yet I do not say that it was not beneficial for the people to be defeated at that time - what else, indeed, can one say concerning the contestants on both sides than that the vanquished were Romans and that the victor was Caesar! - for they were no longer capable of maintaining harmony in the established form of government. It is, of course, impossible for an unadulterated democracy that has grown to so proud an empire to exercise moderation; and so they would later on have undertaken many similar conflicts one after another, and some day would certainly have been either enslaved or ruined".[1] Augustus found a happy solution of the problem in preserving scrupulously the constitutional forms of the democracy in appearance while, in fact, he alone directed the policies of the state. He realized that Julius had erred in violating openly the republican traditions. Dio says that as censor he purged the senate "by urging the ineligible to resign, rather than by using any names openly". "So all these men re-

1 Dio Bk. 47, Ch.39

turned to private life of their own free will, so far as appearances were concerned."[1] The following year (28 B.C.) Caesar held office for the sixth time and conformed in all other respects to the usages handed down from the earliest times, and, in particular, he delivered to Agrippa, his colleague, the bundles of rods as it was incumbent upon him to do, while he, himself, used the other set, and, on completing his term of office, he took the oath according to the ancestral custom.[2] He abolished by a single decree all the illegal measures he had put into effect during the wars and especially during his joint rule with Antony and Lepidus. In the year 27 B.C. by means of an ingenious speech delivered in the senate, in which he announced his intention of giving back to the senate the army, the laws, and the provinces, he succeeded in having his supremacy ratified both by the senate and the people.[3] Dio and Suetonius agree that he refused the dictatorship and censorship for life when these honors were offered him by the people.[4] Dio says that when the senate and people desired to give him some distinctive title, "he was exceedingly desirous of being called 'Romulus', but when he perceived that this caused him to be suspected of desiring the kingship, he desisted from his efforts to obtain it, and took the title of 'Augustus', signifying that he was more than human."[5]

1 Dio.Bk.52,Ch.42
2 Dio.Bk.53,Ch.1
3 Dio.Bk.53,Ch.12
4 Dio.Bk.54,Ch.1; Suet.Ch.58
5 Dio.Bk.53,Ch.16; [illegible]

The senate as a body contined to sit in judgment, and in certain cases trancacted business with embassies and heralds, from both peoples and kings, and the people and the plebs continued to meet for the elections.[1] It was by preserving in appearance the old republican constitution that Augustus was able to hold the supreme power, and to restore order in the state, while he himself, escaped the fate of Julius.

Was Augustus sincere in his efforts to restore the republican form of government, or was he a master of dissimulation using the appearance of democracy to conceal his efforts to gain for himself absolute power? Ferrero and Holmes believe that Augustus adopted the course most necessary to meet the demands of the serious crisis which he had to meet. Ferrero says: "Had Octavianus been a man of action, a Caesar or an Alexander, he might have conceived wider ambitions at this moment and regarded his immediate power and glory as marking the initial stages of a dazzling career. Octavianus, however, was an intellectual character resembling rather Brutus and Cicero than Caesar, cold, prudent and calculating, undisturbed by vast ambition or immoderate thirst for pleasure; a patient worker and far-sighted administrator; his strength consisted rather in subtlety, lucidity and precision of his mind than in the greatness

1 Dio.Bk.53,Ch.21

of his imagination".[1] "Octavianus, however, was the most important, the most powerful and the richest personage in the republic. The wish that he should remain at the head of affairs was overwhelming and was shared by the veterans who had received land, the purchases of confiscated property, the magistrates and senators appointed by the triumvirs, and, indeed, by every participator in the bloody revolution struggle; from Agrippa himself to the lowest centurian, all regarded the power of Octavianus as the one guarantee for the maintenance of present conditions."[2] And in reply to historians who regard his reforms as a fiction intended to hide monarchical beneath republican forms, Ferrero maintains: "Octavianus had no intention of deceiving his contemporaries, nor did he imagine that the echoes of this revolution would reach even our own times. He was simply attempting to solve the difficulties of the moment by a constitutional reform which he considered as likely to meet a temporary need, and as settling nothing except for the ten years of his proconsulship; then, if the situation changed, his attitude and his plans would change also. He had, in fact, reserved to himself the power of resigning this presidency before the end of the ten years if he thought his resignation would not be detrimental to the republic."[3]

Ferrero, Vol.IV, p.127

1 ~~Dio.Bk.53,Ch.16~~
2 Ferrero,Vol.IV,p.131
3 Ferrero,Vol.IV,p.136

T.R.Holmes says: "If it was in a later period that certain laws were specified as not binding upon Augustus, and that he was empowered to conclude treaties at his discretion, to convene the Senate whensoever he pleased, and in short to do anything and everything which he might deem essential to the welfare of the State, the settlement which he concluded made it possible for him and the best of his successors, to organize that government which, despite certain faults, kept barbarians for four centuries at bay and enabled civilization to resist their onslaught when it came.....For in those days what the Roman world required was not self-government, but good government."[1]

Augustus realized that legislation alone was not sufficient to restore the spirit of a people disheartened by long years of strife; and he sought a remedy for the attitude of despair that followed the period of the civil wars in a revival of the traditions of ancient Rome, that, by placing before the minds of men the picture of the virtues and the glories of the past, he might arouse again the patriotic and moral fervor of the old republican days. Were these laudable ambitions the manifestation of a sincere purpose or of a shrewd political design? Many, following the spirit of Tacitus, will ever cast suspicion upon the motives of Augustus: but there

1 T.R.Holmes,p.186

is nothing in his later life to show that his efforts to effect a moral and social reform in the state were not sincere. Ambitious for power he was to be sure, and yet there appears to be no evidence that his private life was not free from serious error. The one blot upon his career, the proscriptions of the triumvirate, may be accounted for by the fact of his extreme youth and his inability or, perhaps, his lack of courage to stop the violence of his colleagues. Suetonius mentions instances of cruelty after Philippi and after Perusia;[1] but his later life seems to have been free from faults of this kind. According to Dio, "These acts were committed chiefly by Antony and Lepidus.....But Caesar seems to have taken part in the business merely because of his sharing the authority, since he himself had no need at all to kill a large number; for he was not naturally cruel....from the time he broke off his joint rulership with his colleagues and held power alone, he no longer did anything of the sort.[2] In the life of Antony, Plutarch says, "This Triumvirate was very hateful to the Romans, and Antony most of all bore the blame, because he was older than Caesar and had greater authority than Lepidus."

Economic depression, the general pessimism and a change in attitude toward civil duties that arose during the civil war and the proscriptions, resulted in

1 Suet.Aug.Ch.XIII; Ch.XV
2 Dio. Bk.47 Ch.7

an alarming prevalence of divorce and an unwillingness to assume the responsibilities of family life and the rearing of children.[1] Augustus, realizing the danger to the future prosperity of the state that threatened to result from these social evils, endeavored both by example and by legislation to bring about a reform of family and social institutions. We read in Suetonius, "Leges retractavit et quasdam ex integro sanxit, ut sumptuariam et de adulteriis et de pudicitia, de ambitu, de maritandis ordinibus."[2] And on the Monumentum Ancyranum Augustus states, "Legibus novis latis complura exempla maiorum ex olescentia iam ex nostro usu reduxi; et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi."[3] Dio relates that he laid heavier assessments upon the unmarried men and upon women without husbands, and on the other hand offered prizes for marriage and the begetting of children. And, since among the nobility, there were more males than females, he allowed all who wished, except senators, to marry freedwomen, and ordered that their offspring should be legitimate."[4] Suetonius mentions also his attempts to revive pride in the ancient manner of dress: "Etiam habitum vestitumque pristinum reducere studuit, ac visa quondam pro contione pullatorum turba indignabundus et clamitans.

Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam!

1 Frank p.352
2 Suet. Aug.,Ch.34
3 Mon. Ancy. 8.2.12-14
4 Dio. Bk.54,Ch.16

negotium aedilibus dedit, ne quem posthac paterentur in Foro circave nisi positis lacernis togatum consistere."[1]

He revived some of the ancient rites which were no longer observed such as the 'Salutis Augurium', the 'Sacrum Lupercale', and the 'Ludi Saeculares'.[2] To encourage devotion to the gods he built many temples and repaired others which had fallen into decay. On the Monumentum Ancyranum he states that he repaired eighty-two temples in all.

By beautifying the city, he aimed to arouse a sense of pride in the grandeur of Rome. Suetonius tells us, "Urbem neque pro maiestate imperii ornatam et inundationibus incendiisque obnoxiam excoluit adeo ut iure sit gloriatus marmoream se relinquere, quam latericiam accepisset."[3] He encouraged wealthy men to take an interest in his plans for improving the appearance of the city. On the Monumentum Ancyranum, Augustus mentions among his public works the senate house, the Forum Augusti, and the theatre of Marcellus. Thus the grandeur of the city inspired in the minds of men a sense of pride in her splendor and a confidence in her mission as mistress of the world.

That the citizens might be encouraged to emulate the virtues of the heroes of the past, he honored next to the gods the memory of those leaders by whose achieve-

1 Suet., Aug.,Ch.40
Aeneid I.282
2 Suet., Ch.31
3 Suet., Aug.,28

ments Rome had been raised to her proud estate as a world empire. He restored the works of these men with their original inscriptions, and in the two colonades of his forum he dedicated statues of all the Roman generals who had triumphed and by an edict he declared; "Commentum se id, ut ad illorum.....velut ad exemplar et ipse, dum viveret, et insequentium aetatium principes exigerentur a civibus."[1] And he moved the statue of Pompey from the hall in which Caesar had been slain and placed it on a marble arch opposite the grand door of Pompey's theatre.[2]

The remarkable success of Augustus in restoring order to the Roman world may be ascribed to his ability to comprehend every phase of the situation and to find the proper remedy for each difficulty and the proper persons to help him to effect the solution of the problem confronting him. Cold and practical though he appeared to be, he appreciated fully the power of the arts to mold the character of a nation and, with this interest in view, he became the patron of men of letters. Suetonius tells us, "Ingenia saeculi sui omnibus modis fovit. Recitantis et benigne et patienter audiit nec tantum carmina et historias, sed et orationes et dialogos."[3]

There is often a tendency to be suspicious in judging the motives of a patron of the arts and to look for a personal motive as the true source of his beneficence. In the case of Augustus, this motive has been

1 Suet., Aug., 31
2 Suet., Aug., 31
3 Suet., Aug., 89

frequently asserted and he has been accused of seeking personal glory above all in his encouragement of literature. Appreciating the advantages that he could derive from being honored by the best writers of the age, and, being by nature eager for praise, he no doubt desired to be mentioned in their works as an expression of gratitude for his favor; but it is hardly just to infer that personal glory was his sole motive. For from the time that Augustus assumed the responsibility of government, he devoted his whole life with untiring energy to one great purpose--the reconstruction and glorification of Rome; and it was as a means to the accomplishment of this end that he encouraged the writing of good literature.

Suetonius says that from early youth Augustus devoted himself eagerly and with diligence to oratory and liberal studies, and even during the war at Mutina amid the burden of responsibilities, he was said to have read, written, and declaimed every day.[1] He was interested in Greek studies in which he excelled greatly, being well acquainted with Greek and Latin authors and even taking pleasure in the Greek comedy which he frequently staged at his entertainments. In both Greek and Latin authors he particularly looked for precepts and examples instructive to the public and to individuals; these he often copied down and sent to members of his household

1 Suet., Aug., Ch. 84

or to his generals and provincial governors whenever he wished to admonish any of them.[1]

Augustus chose as the recipients of his favors men who were in every way deserving of his interest, and his friendship with Horace, Vergil, Agrippa, and Maecenas was based on a sincere admiration for their excellent qualities. Suetonius gives us the impression that, beneath the cold and formal exterior of the politician, there was in Augustus a capacity for enjoying genuine friendship, for he says of him, "Amicitias neque facile admisit et constantissime retinuit, non tantum virtutes ac merita cuiusque digne prosecutus, sed vitia quoque et delicta, dum taxat modica, perpessus. neque enim temere ex omni numero in amicitia eius afflicti reperientur praeter Salvidienum Rufum, quem ad consulatum usque, et Cornelium Gallum, quem ad praefecturum Aegypti, ex infima utrumque fortuna proverat.....Reliqui potentia atque opibus ad finem vitae sui quisque ordinis principes floruerunt, quamquam et offensis intervenientibus.[2] With those who remained true to him, his relations were cordial and affable to the extent that even when they refused favors he had offered them, he showed no resentment, as in the case of Vergil who, according to Suetonius, when Augustus offered him the property of a man who had been exiled, could not make up his mind to accept it.[3] And

1 Suet., Aug., Ch.89
2 Suet., Aug., 66
3 Suet., Life of Vergil

Dio mentions the fact that he even allowed his friends the freedom of correcting his faults; that whenever his nature or the burden of his duties led him into outbursts of passion, these were reproved by the speech of his friends.[1]

Whatever concessions the poet may have been forced to make to the demands of patronage, he found fair compensation in the benefits he derived from it. "When one remembers," says Tenney Frank, "that writers could not draw any adequate compensation from their productions, since all books had to be copied by hand, and unauthorized copying could not be prevented by any copyright law, one sees that patronage was absolutely necessary if literature was to survive." The poet, relieved from the burden of pecuniary cares, was free to allow his imagination to soar beyond the concerns of the material world to the contemplation of the "grandeur of generalities". Vergil's love of nature might not have found expression had he not been free to dwell on its beauties undisturbed. The Odes of Horace written in the peace and contentment of his Sabine farm reflect the joy that freedom from care brought into his life. Juvenal, describing the condition of literature under the reign of Domitian, reveals with his characteristic vividness a very different picture of the poet's life:

1 Dio., Bk., 55, Ch., 7

> Neque enim cantare sub antro
> Pierio thyrsumque potest contingere maesta
> paupertas atque aeris inops, quo nocte dieque
> corpus eget: satur est cum dicit Horatius 'euhoe.'
> quis locus ingenio, nisi cum se carmine solo
> vexant et dominis Cirrhae Nysaeque feruntur
> pectora vestra duas non admittentia curas?
> magnae mentis opus nec de lodice paranda
> attonitae, currus et equos faciesque deorum
> aspicere et qualis Rutulum confundat Erinys.
> nam si Vergilio puer et tolerabile desset
> hospitium, caderent omnes a crinibus hydri,
> surda nihil gemeret grave bucina.[1]

In the works of Vergil and Horace there is evidence of the beneficial influence that the contact with the finest minds of the age, statesmen and literary men, at the court of Augustus exerted upon the development of their art. A refinement and restraint in thought and expression in the later works of Horace replaces the invective and, at times, coarseness of the earlier Satires. And of Vergil Glover remarks, "Aeneas might not have been the high and mighty prince he is, if Vergil had not known Augustus."[2]

To the modern mind the extravagant terms used by the two poets to express their admiration of Augustus

1 Juv., Satire 7, ll.59-71
2 Glover, page 27

are distasteful and sometimes even startling. But if one considers what the rule of Augustus meant to the Roman world--peace, prosperity, and security after long years of strife--it is possible to understand their exaggeration in recording the deeds of the man by whose efforts these blessings were won for the world. And it is to be remembered that the expressions of deification, so abhorrent to the modern mind were not at all shocking to the religious sentiments of the Romans. The adulation of Augustus which appears in Vergil and Horace was justified to a great extent by the services of the Emperor to the state. In praise of Domitian, who was certainly less deserving of the honor, Martial uses language equally extravagant:

> Si desiderium, Caesar, populique patrumque
> respicis et Latiae gaudia vera togae,
> redde deum votis poscentibus. invidet hosti
> Roma suo, veniat laurea multa licet:
> terrarum dominum propius videt ille tuoque
> terretur vultu barbarus et fruitur.[1]

and

> Iam, Caesar, vel nocte veni: stent astra licebit,
> non derit populo te veniente dies.[2]

Instances of flattery no less extreme, and perhaps, less deserved, may be found in literary periods

1 Martial Epigrams VII.5
2 Martial Epigrams VIII.21

much nearer to our own times. Take for example the dedicatory epistle to Anne of Austria which is found in connection with the "Polyeucte" of Corneille, in which he pays tribute to the piety of the Queen Regent in such terms as these: "Toutes les fois que j'ai mis sur notre scène des vertus morales ou politiques, j'en ai toujours cru les tableaux trop peu dignes de paraître devant Elle, quand j'ai considéré qu'avec quelque soin que je les puisse choisir dans l'histoire, et quelques ornements dont l'artifice les pût enrichir, elle en voyait de plus grands exemples dans elle-meme." And Racine in a discourse before the Academie on the reception of T. Corneille, equals anything we can quote from antiquity in his abject flattery, when he speaks of Louis XIV as the "wisest, and most perfect of all men, whom it was happiness to approach and to study in the smallest acts of his life, always calm, always master of himself, without inequality and without weakness."

Ben Jonson, in the dedicatory epistle of his "Catiline", expresses his esteem for William, Earl of Pembroke, in these words: "In so thick and dark and ignorance as now almost covers the age, I crave leave to stand near your light, and by that to be read. Posterity may pay your benefit the honour and thanks, when it shall know that you dare, in these jig-given times, to countenance a legitimate Poem. I call it so, against all

noise of opinion; from whose crude and airy reports, I appeal to the great and singular faculty of judgment in your lordship, able to vindicate truth from error. It is the first of this race that ever I dedicated to any person; and had I not thought it the best, it should have been taught a less ambition. Now it appracheth your censure cheerfully, and with the same assurance that innocency would appear before a magistrate."

In the introduction to the essay on the "Advancement of Learning", Bacon honors King James by such extravagant praise as this: "For I am well assured that this which I shall say is no amplification at all, but a positive and measured truth; which is, that there hath not been since Christ's time any king or temporal monarch, which hath been so learned in all literature and erudition, divine and human---------- And the more, because there is met in your Majesty a rare conjunction, as well of divine and sacred literature, as of profane and human; so as your Majesty standeth invested of that triplicity, which in great veneration was ascribed to the ancient Hermes; the power and fortune of a king, the knowledge and illumination of a priest, and the learning and universality of a philosopher."

Instances of flattery no less extravagant may be found in the dedications of Dryden's plays. To Philip, Earl of Leicester, to whom "Don Sebastian" is dedicated,

Dryden pays tribute thus: "What a glorious character was this once in Rome! I should say, in Athens; when, in the disturbances of a state as mad as ours, the wise Pomponius transported all the remaining wisdom and virtue to his country into the sanctuary of peace and learning. But I would ask the world, (for you, my lord, are too nearly concerned to judge this cause,) whether there may not yet be found a character of a noble Englishman, equally shining with that illustrious Roman? Whether I need to name a second Atticus? or whether the world has not already prevented me, and fixed it there, without my naming? Not a second, with a 'longo sed proximus intervallo;' not a young Marcellus, flattered by a poet into the resemblance of the first, with a 'frons laeta parum, et deiecto lumina vultu,' and the rest follows, 'si qua fata aspero rumpas, tu Marcellus eris;' but a person of the same stamp and magnitude, who owes nothing to the former, besides the word Roman, and the superstition of reverence, devolving on him by the precedency of eighteen hundred years."

Yet in spite of the disadvantages that must naturally accompany patronage, art and literature have always flourished under the protection of a sympathetic ruler. Titian enjoyed the favor of Charles V who, in his enthusiasm for the artist, is said to have once remarked that Titian was worthy of being served by a Caesar. Had it not been for the encouragement of Augustus, Vergil might never have produced the Aeneid.

VERGIL AND AUGUSTUS

Is Vergil's admiration for Augustus merely the manifestation of gratitude for the favors received from him or of hopes for future favors? Undoubtedly a nature as sensitive as Vergil's could not fail to cherish a deep affection for one to whom he was so deeply indebted; but his attitude toward the Emperor may be explained by other facts in his experience which caused him to find in the administration of Augustus the ideal which inspired the Aeneid.

According to the account of Suetonius, Vergil was born in the first consulship of Gnaeus Pompeius and Marcus Crassus in a district called Andes, not far from Mantua.[1] At the time of his birth, the Punic wars were a memorable episode in the annals of Rome, and the Scipios had taken their place in the long line of heroes who had made the history of the early republic. But the events of the years immediately preceding the birth of Vergil presented no such inspiring picture; for from the time of the Gracchi, the Roman Forum was frequently the scene of horrible bloodshed as citizen butchered citizen in the attempt to gain the mastery of the Roman world. Only a decade before the birth of Vergil, the Forum was drenched with blood, and the noblest of Rome's manhood were sacrificed to the passions of greed and hate that

1 Suet., Vita, 1

prompted the Sullan proscriptions. In his boyhood Vergil must also have heard the exciting events of the conspiracy of Catiline frequently discussed.

It was during the youth of Vergil that Caesar made his spectacular conquests in Gaul, and the vivid imagination of the young poet must have been stirred by the stories of his experiences. Conway suggests that the young Octavian and Vergil may have met in the year 50 B.C. when Octavian spent the summer with his uncle in Cisalpine Gaul. He quotes a passage from the eighth book of the "De Bello Gallico" in which Hirtius relates that Caesar came to Cisalpine Gaul in the year 50 B.C. and was busy canvassing in the province; and that he was received with great enthusiasm in the Transpadane part of the province in which the poet's family lived. He thinks it probable that the young Octavian may have spent the summer with his uncle and that the young men became acquainted at this time. The Octavius to whom the "Culex" is dedicated may be the future Augustus.[1]

Vergil's admiration for Julius which appears in the Georgics and in the Aeneid was due not only to his appreciation of his accomplishments as a conqueror, and of his humane policy by which Caesar, as dictator, astounded the Roman world, anxiously awaiting a renewal of the Sullan proscriptions; but, in a more special way, it was the expression of his gratitude to Caesar as the

1 Conway, page 95

benefactor who secured the rights of citizenship for the Transpadane district.

The murder of Caesar again plunged the Roman world into the horrors of civil war, until the policy of Octavian, after Actium, kindled in men's hearts the hope that at last the peace for which they had so ardently longed might be realized. Vergil saw in the rule of Augustus an era of peace and security, a restoration of the ancient Roman spirit; for Vergil did not judge the situation from the point of view of a Cato, a Cicero, or a Tacitus. Stern, unyielding, Cato died by his own hand after the battle of Thapsus, unable to endure the thought that the republic was no longer a reality; to Cicero the triumvirate meant the death of constitutional government. But to the poetic imagination of Vergil, Augustus appears as a savior who has brought the blessings of peace to a world exhausted by strife, who, by precept and example, has restored primitive virtue, and who has inspired in the Roman heart a desire to imitate the heroes of the past and to fulfil Rome's mission as mistress of the world.

Vergil both by nature and by experience was incapable of investigating the hidden motives of statesmen or of analyzing the political conditions existing in the state. He spent most of his life in the country, seldom visiting Rome, as Suetonius tells us.[1] His love

1 Suet., Vita, 11

of the country and his admiration for the life of the farmer he expresses in the Georgics:-

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
agricolas, quibus ipsa procul discordibus armis
fundit humo facilem victum iustissima tellus.
.....
at secura quies et nescia fallere vita
dives opum variarum, at latis otia fundis,
speluncae vivique lacus et frigida Tempe,
mugisque boum mollesque sub arbore somni,
non absunt; illic salus ac lustra ferarum,
et patiens operum exiguoque adsueta iuventus
sacra deum sanctique patres; extrema per illos
Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit.[1]

Suetonius mentions Vergil's devotion to study: "Inter cetera studia medicinae quoque ac maxime mathematicae operam dedit."[2] His works give evidence of his acquaintance with both Greek literature and the early Roman authors. According to Suetonius, Lucretius died on the very day on which Vergil assumed the toga virilis. It is not surprising that the revolutionary work of this poet, which so astounded the Roman world, should have influenced the thought of Vergil. While the scientific imagination of Lucretius and some of his religious teachings were not in harmony with Vergil's belief, there

1 Georg., II 458-474
2 Suet., Vita, 15

was much in the system of Lucretius to attract him. An early poem attributed to Vergil expresses his desire to study Epicurean philosophy:

> Nos ad beatos vela mittimus portus,
> Magni petentes docta dicta Sironis,
> Vitamque ab omni vindicabimus cura.

And later in the Georgics he speaks of his longing to pursue the study of philosophy:

> Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
> atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
> subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari.[1]

Suetonius tells us that Vergil was unusually shy and retiring, that he was so modest in speech and thought, that at Naples he was commonly called "Parthenias" and that whenever he appeared in public in Rome, he would take refuge in the nearest house to avoid those who followed him and pointed him out.[2] He pleaded but one case in court[3] and there is no evidence that he performed any military service. He could then readily find sympathetic understanding in the attitude of Lucretius:

> sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
> edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
> despicere unde queas alios passimque videre
> errare atque viam palantis quaerere vitae
> certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,

1 Georg. II 490-492
2 Suet., Vita 11
3 Suet., Vita 16

noctes atque dies niti praestante labore
ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri.[1]

Vergil can speak with awe of the valor of the heroes of the past, but the din of battle arouses no response in his imagination; it is the pathos of war that he sees ever before him. At the burning of Troy, Priam meets death only after he has had to witness the death of his own son. Pallas goes forth to war-

chlamyde et pictis conspectus in armis:
qualis ubi Oceani perfusus Lucifer unda,
quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignis,
extulit os sacrum caelo tenebrasque resolvit.[2]

In striking contrast to this picture of his triumphant departure, Vergil portrays the pathetic picture of the father's grief when the lifeless body of his son is brought home:

At non Evandrum potis est vis ulla tenere,
sed venit in medios. Feretro Pallanta reposto
procubuit super atque haeret lacrimansque gemensque,
et via vix tandem vocis laxata dolore est:
"non haec, O Palla, dederas promissa parenti
cautius ut saevo velles te credere Marti.
Haud ignarus eram, quantum nova gloria in armis
et praedulce decus primo certamine posset.
Primitiae iuvenis miserae bellique propinqui

1 Lucretius, II.7-13
2 Aen., VIII.587-591

dura rudimenta et nulli exaudita deorum
vota precesque meae! Tuque, O sanctissima coniunx
felix morte tua neque in hunc servata dolorem![1]

Aeneas is touched with pity as he gazes upon the lifeless form of the youthful Lausus whom he has slain:

Transiit et parmam mucro, levia arma minacis,
et tunicam, molli mater quam neverat auro,
implevitque sinum sanguis; tum vita per auras
concessit maesta ad manis corpusque reliquit.
At vero ut voltum vidit morientis et ora,
ora modis Anchisiades pallentia miris
ingemuit miserans graviter dextramque tetendit
et mentem patriae subiit pietatis imago.[2]

Such was the picture that war printed on the imagination of Vergil-sorrowing mothers, fathers downcast with grief over the death of sons snatched away in the enthusiasm of youthful vigor, sacrifice, death, and devastation; and it was as the savior who had delivered Rome from such afflictions as these that Vergil honored Augustus.

At a time when the old Roman spirit was in a state of decay, Vergil, coming from a community to which citizenship had but recently been granted, is filled with the fresh and vigorous zeal of one who has lately acquired a coveted gift. His heart glows with an intense love of Rome, pride in the glories of her past and a faith in her mission as mistress of the world.

1 Aen., XI.148-159
2 Aen., X.817-824

Jupiter promises Venus that Rome's empire will know no limit of time or of space;

his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono,
imperium sine fine dedi.[1]

Vergil, who in his tender pity for the sufferings of man yearned for the blessings of peace, the ardent patriot, the gentle dreamer who found his happiness in a life of retirement and contemplation, saw the rule of Augustus not with the eye of a critical statesman, but as an idealist who associates the name of Augustus with the idea of the grandeur of Rome and the hope of peace.

After the defeat of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi in 42 B.C., the triumvirs began the distribution of lands to their veterans, to whom they had promised the lands of eighteen cities situated in the most fertile territories of Italy, including Cremona. As these did not prove sufficient for all, they had to confiscate land in the neighboring districts. When Vergil's father was threatened with the loss of his farm at Andes, near Mantua, the young poet secured an introduction to Octavian at Rome through the assistance of Asinius Pollio, governor of Cisalpine Gaul, and as a result of this interview, he recovered his farm.[2] The first Eclogue is an expression of gratitude for this favor. He depicts the pathos of the farmer who is obliged to abandon his farm:

1 Aen., I 278-279
2 Suet., Vita 19

En umquam patrios longo post tempore fines
pauperis et tuguri congestum caespite culmen,
post aliquot, mea regna videns, mirabor aristas?
impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit?
barbarus has segetes? en, quo discordia cives
produxit miseros! his nos consevimus agros![1]

The happiness of Tityrus, who represents Vergil, is portrayed in contrast to this picture:

O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit.
Namque erit ille mihi semper deus; illius aram
saepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.
ille meas errare boves, ut cernis, et ipsum
ludere quae vellem calamo permisit agresti.[2]

---

hic illum vidi iuvenem, Meliboee, quotannis
bis senos cui nostra dies altaria fumant.
hic mihi responsum primus dedit ille petenti:
'Pascite ut ante boves, pueri; submittite tauros'.[3]

Later Vergil had to seek protection a second time from a soldier who menaced him. It may be to this event that he refers in the ninth Eclogue; but Glover believes that the ninth Eclogue, instead of alluding to a second event, is really earlier in date than the first and that the two poems refer to different stages of the same story and that the first is given this prominent place as a tribute to Augustus.

1 Ec. I. 67-73
2 Ec. I. 6-10
3 Ec. I. 42-45

The fourth Eclogue describes a golden age which is to come upon the earth with the birth of a certain child. Who was this child? It may have been a child of Augustus of Antony, or of Pollio. Nettleship says that the most ancient commentators, if we may judge by the notes in Macrobis Servius, and the Berne scholia, were not agreed whether the poem was to be referred to the child of Octavian, or to one of Pollio's sons. Since the date of the Eclogue was 40 B.C., the year of the consulship of Pollio, when he assisted in negotiating the peace of Brundisium, any of these births might have given occasion to Vergil to give expression to the hopes for an era of peace for which men were longing. Sellar dismisses the theory that the prediction is made in regard to the child born to Augustus and Scribonia, their daughter Julia;[1] but Conway is certain that the child was an offspring of some branch of the house of the Caesars, most probably Julia.[2] The resemblance between the language of the Eclogue and that of the Prophecy of Isaiah caused many in the Middle Ages to believe that the Eclogue was a Messianic prophecy. Sellar believes it very possible that the ideas of prophecy may have become known to Vergil through his acquaintance with Alexandrine sources or through the new Sibylline prophecies manufactured in the East, which poured into Rome after the old Sibylline books had perished in the burning of the Capitol in the

1 Sellar Vergil p.146
2 Conway p.32

time of Sulla.[1] St. Jerome does not accept this theory: Dante believes it. Pope in the advertisement to his Messiah says, "In reading several passages of the prophet Isaiah, which foretell the coming of Christ, and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts and those in the Pollio of Vergil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect that the Eclogue was taken from a Sibylline prophecy on the same subject." Sainte Beuve expresses the view that the Eclogue is a proof of Vergil's instinct to look forward into the future and to anticipate the conditions which the Roman world was to experience within the next ten years. "Cette Eglogue, même en y faisant la part de tout dithyrambe composé sur un berceau, dépasse les limites du genre, et elle dévance aussi sa date, elle est plus grande que son moment, et digne déjà des années qui suivront Actium. Virgile, dans une courte éclaircir d'orage, anticipe et découvre le repos et la félicité du monde sous un Auguste ou sous un Trajan."[2] The Eclogue may very possibly be a compliment to Octavian, expressing in allegorical form the advent of a golden era which is expected to follow the peace of Brundisium. As Conington says, "The precise reference is still, and will probably remain, an unsolved problem."

1 Sellar p.146
2 St. Beuve p.61

Among the gods whom Vergil calls upon to assist him in the elaborate invocation of the first Georgic, he names Augustus as a god of the near future, and discusses the various realms in which he may rule as a divinity:

> tuque adeo, quem mox quae sint habitura deorum
> concilia, incertum est, urbisne invisere, Caesar,
> terrarumque velis curam et te maxumus orbis
> auctorem frugum tempestatumque potentem
> accipiat cingens materna tempora myrto,
> an deus immensi venias maris ac tua nautae
> numina sola colant, tibi serviat ultima Thule
> teque sibi generum Tethys emat omnibus undis,
> anne novum tardis sidus te mensibus addas,
> qua locus Erigonem inter Chelasque sequentis
> panditur;[1]

Conington remarks that this is probably the first specimen of the kind, and he compares it to the later instances in which Lucan invoked Nero and Statius Domitian. What are we to understand by the language of this invocation? In the first Eclogue Tityrus says,

> O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit

but this instance may be easily dismissed as an exaggeration consistent with the symbolical character of the poem, and does not necessarily indicate Vergil's belief in the divinity of the future Augustus. Glover thinks that the passage in the first Georgic should be

1 Georg. I.24-34

compared with Catullus' translation of the Coma Berenices and that the elaborate enumeration of the realms of heaven, hell, and the sea is a mere piece of Alexandrianism. He argues that the Epicureanism which he expresses later in the book, would prove that he is following the precedent of Lucretius in invoking the assistance of Venus, a heavenly power in whom he did not believe. "Indeed if we can draw any safe inference from the vision granted to Aeneas in Hades, Augustus stands on essentially the same footing and is subjected to the same conditions as the other patriots there revealed."[1]

Sellar is inclined to consider the passage as an instance of genuine deification. "As the office of the deified Julius is to answer the prayers of the husbandmen, such, too, will be the office of Augustus; and it is in this relation that he is invoked in the first Georgic among the deities whose function it is to watch over the fields."[2] "Vergil, to whose mind, in all things affecting either the state or the individual, the invisible world of faith appears very near the actual world of experience, seems sincerely to believe in the favor of heaven watching over him." Sellar notes that the belief in the divinity of the genius attending on each individual, and the custom of erecting altars to some abstract quality such as the 'Clemency of Caesar'

1 Glover p.159
2 Sellar Vergil pp.16-18

may help to explain the supposed union of god and man in the person of the Emperor. The acceptance of the ideas of Lucretius found in the Georgics are not an obstacle to the deification of Augustus, according to Sellar, for Vergil did not accept the system in its entirety, nor did he examine with scientific precision the points in which it differed from his belief. Sellar concludes that ".....the juxtaposition of Caesar with the gods of Olympus and the protecting deities of the husbandmen is too carefully meditated to admit of our supposing the lines, "Tuque adeo te adsuesce vocare" to be intended to be taken as a mere play of fancy.[1]

Suetonius relates that, "Templa, quamvis sciret etiam proconsulibus decerni solere, in nulla tamen provincia nisi communi suo Romaeque nomine recepit. Nam in urbe quidem pertinacissime abstinuit hoc honore; atque etiam argenteas statuas olim sibi positas conflavit omnis exque iis aureas cortinas Apollini Palatino dedicavit."[2] In Dio Cassius we read that when Agrippa wished to place a statue of Augustus in the Pantheon and to bestow upon him the honor of having the structure named after him, and when Augustus rejected both honors, he placed in the temple itself a statue of the former Caesar, and in the ante-room, statues of Augustus.[3] In the East where Deification was a natural honor conferred upon rulers,

1 Sellar Vergil, 217
2 Suet., Aug. Ch.52
3 Dio Bk. 53 Ch.27

he allowed the name of Augustus to be associated with the goddess Roma in a state cult that rapidly spread through the East. Tacitus mentioned that Augustus allowed a temple to be raised to him and the City of Rome at Pergamus.[1] The Princeps, while conscious of the dangers that threatened the acceptance of divine honors at Rome during life, encouraged the cult in the provinces, with the belief that it would serve as a unifying force by inspiring devotion to the ruling city. Vergil's expressions of gratitude and admiration in terms so extravagant that they are readily understood as implying deification of the Princeps,were evidently not displeasing to him. For Suetonius relates that when Augustus was returning from his victory at Actium, and lingered at Atella, Vergil read the Georgics to him for four days in succesion: and neither then nor at any future time does he seem to have demanded that these passages should be supressed, as he prevented the other attempts to confer divine honors upon him. Perhaps he was too well conscious of the value of the compliments of the poet as an asset in enhancing the dignity of his position.

The gods are invoked to spare Augustus to the city in her distress:

> Di patrii, Indigetes, et Romule Vestaque mater,
> quae Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia servas,
> hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo

1 Tac., Annals IV.37

ne prohibete! Satis iam pridem sanguine nostro
Laomedonteae luimus periuria Troiae;
iam pridem nobis caeli te regia, Caesar,
invidet, atque hominum queritur curare triumphos:[1]

Like the Camilli and the Drusi, he is a triumphant conqueror, who will crush Rome's enemies and make her supreme in the world:

Haec genus acre virum Marsos pubemque Sabellam
adsuetumque malo Ligurem Volscosque verutos
extulit, haec Decios, Marios magnosque Camillos,
Scipiadas duros bello et te, maxime Caesar,
qui nunc extremis Asiae iam victor in oris
imbellum avertis Romanis arcibus Indum.[2]

In the opening passage of the third book, Vergil announces his intention of writing a poem in which, under the allegorical figure of a temple, he will celebrate the deeds of Augustus:

Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit
Aonio rediens deducam vertice musas;
primus Idumaeas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas,
et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam
propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
Mincius et tenera praetexit arundine ripas.
In medio mihi Caesar erit templumque tenebit.[3]

1 Georg. I.498-504
2 Georg.II.167-172
3 Georg.III.10-18

He will portray Caesar as a second Romulus who will triumph over East and West:

> In foribus pugnam ex auro solidoque elephanto
> Gangaridum faciam victorisque arma Quirini,
> atque hic undantem bello magnumque fluentem
> Nilum ac navali surgentis aere columnas.
> Addam urbes Asiae domitas pulsumque Niphaten
> fidentemque fuga Parthum versisque sagittis
> et duo rapta manu diverso ex hoste tropaea
> bisque triumphatas utroque ab litore gentes.[1]

This project, never completed in the form he had anticipated, found its realization in the Aeneid.

Extravagant adulation is not the only return the poet must make for the benefits of patronage; for there are occasions when his obligations force him to make the most difficult of all concessions--the sacrifice of a friend to the demands of his patron. That Vergil had to face this problem, a note in Servius in regard to the closing lines of the Georgics bears testimony: "Sane Sciendum, ut supra diximus, ultimam partem huius libri esse mutatam: nam laudes Galli habuit locus ille, qui nunc Orphei continet fabulum, Quae inserta est, postquam irato Augusto Gallus occisus est".

Dio relates the story of the downfall of Gallus

1 Georgics III.26-33

thus: "Cornelius Gallus was encouraged to insolence by the honor shown him, Thus he indulged in a great deal of disrespectful gossip about Augustus and was guilty of many reprehensible actions besides; for he not only set up images of himself practically everywhere in Egypt but also inscribed upon the pyramids a list of his achievements. For this act he was accused by Valerius Largus, his comrade and intimate, and was disfranchised by Augustus, so that he was prevented from living in the Emperor's provinces. After this had happened, he was attacked by many others, and numerous indictments were brought against him. The senate unanimously voted that he should be convicted in the courts, exiled and deprived him of his estate, that this estate should be given to Augustus, and that the senate itself should offer sacrifices. Overwhelmed by grief at this, Gallus committed suicide before the decree took effect."[1] In 1876, an inscribed stone was found built into the paved approach to the temple of Augustus at Philae. On this stone there is a record of the victories of Gallus in Egyptian, Latin, and Greek, and in the center of the inscription, there is a large portrait cut deep in the stone, representing someone on horseback, riding down upon a suppliant foe. The features of this portrait have been hacked out. The builders of the Temple of Augustus placed the whole slab with the inscription face

1 Dio, Bk.53,Ch.23

upwards to be trodden on by everyone who approached to worship at the Emperor's shrine.[1]

Sellar attributes the removal of the tribute to Gallus to a lack of independence and to an excess of deference to power on the part of Vergil. "It is forever to be regretted," he says, "that he was induced to sacrifice not only the tribute of admiration originally offered to the friend of his youth, but even the symmetrical conception of his greatest poem, to the jealousy Augustus entertained of the memory of Gallus."[2] Augustus had conferred a great honor upon Gallus in choosing him for his first prefect of Egypt. "Why Augustus should have chosen of all men a romantic verse-writing Celt for this astounding task of organizing a vast monopolistic empire; of digging canals and super-intending oil, beer, and clothing factories, is beyond comprehension," Tenney Frank observes. "Memories of school day versatility--for they had been schoolmates--may have influenced him."[3] The ingratitude of Gallus was a bitter disappointment to Augustus, no doubt, and yet, Suetonius says, he grieved for the calamity to which his folly had brought him. It is difficult to see how Vergil could have acted otherwise under the conditions. He had been devoted to Gallus; but he owed much to Augustus, and it did not seem proper to conclude

1 Conway, p.107
2 Sellar, Vergil p.127
3 T.Frank, p.365

a work in which he had sung the praises of Augustus, by a passage honoring one who had injured his benefactor and patron. It was rather propriety than servility that dictated Vergil's act.

The Georgics close with a tribute to the achievements of Augustus in the East:

> Haec super arvorum cultu pecorumque canebam
> et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum
> fulminat Euphraten bello, victorque volentis
> per populos dat iura, viamque adfectat Olympo.
> Illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
> Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti
> carmina qui lusi pastorum, audaxque iuventa,
> Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

These lines, which some critics consider the work of a grammarian, not of Vergil, Conington believes to be genuine. He calls attention to the fact that they appear in Servius and in all the best manuscripts, and he adds, "But the unanimity of the manuscripts is an argument not easy to rebut, while the lines may be vindicated on their own ground as completing a poem which otherwise would wear an unfinished air, and as containing nothing unworthy of Vergil. The poet had begun with Caesar; he now ends with him, contriving at the same time to institute a kind of parallel between the laurels which the master of the world had been winning in Asia and the more peaceful triumphs which the Muse had been

achieving at Naples."

In the life of Vergil, Suetonius makes this statement in regard to the composition of the Aeneid: "Novissime 'Aeneidem' inchoavit, argumentum varium ac multiplex et quasi amborum Homeri carminum instar, praeterea nominibus ac rebus Graecis Latinsque commune, et in quo, quod maxime studebat, Romanae simul et Augusti origo contineretur."[1]

The primary purpose of the Aeneid is to tell the story of a mighty empire which has been built up by the achievements of a long line of heroes after generations of unbroken success. It is not a political pamphlet designed to justify the monarchical tendencies of Augustus. For on the shield of Aeneas does he not picture Cato, the stanch republican, as a lawgiver in the lower world? It is not as an absolute monarch that Augustus is celebrated in the Aeneid, but as one of a long line of heroes of the republic, as a savior who has been sent by the gods to bring peace and glory to the Roman world.

Nor is the Aeneid a sort of allegory written in servile flattery in which Aeneas in every word and act is a portrayal of Augustus. St. Beuve quotes a curious theory of Dunlap that Aeneas is an ideal type of Augustus, resembling him in every detail of his life:

1 Suet., Vita 21

dutiful toward his father as Augustus was toward Caesar; compared in beauty to Apollo as Augustus liked to be; descending to the lower world as Augustus desired to be initiated into the Eleusiniah mysteries at Athens; opposing Turnus, Latinus, Amata, as Augustus fought Antony and his brother; fleeing from Dido and conquering his enemies as Augustus triumphed over Cleopatra. "Non, non," says St. Beuve, "encore une fois non, me crie de toutes ses forces ma conscience poétique; non, cela n'est pas, et plus vous dépensez d'esprit et de curiosité ingénieuse a découvrir quelques rapports dans ces petites circonstances rapprochées du poème à l'histoire plus vous prouvez contre vous-meme, car jamais génie vraiment poétique n'a procédé ainsi."[1] Vergil found many corresponding traits in the characters of Aeneas and Augustus,--filial devotion, devotion to the gods, triumphs over obstacles; but to trace the resemblance farther would be unfair to the art of Vergil.

In a work written to celebrate the grandeur of Rome, it is but natural that Vergil should desire to give honor to Augustus, by associating his name intimately with the story of Rome's rise to power and glory. The Julian gens is shown to be of divine origin, and it is identified with the history of the state by its ancient ancestry which is traced back through Iulus and Aeneas to Venus--

1 St. Beuve p.72

nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar,
imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris,
Iulus, a magno demissum nomen Iulo.[1]

Atys is mentioned as the ancestor of the Atian family, of which the mother of Augustus was a member, and, as Conington remarks, the attachment of Iulius to him is a prediction of the future union of the two families:

Alter Atys, genus unde Atii duxere Latini,
Parvus Atys, pueroque puer dilectus Iulo.[2]

The Drusi are mentioned in the prophecy of Anchises, perhaps, as a compliment to Livia.

The rule of Augustus is sanctioned by the favor of the gods; for it is Jupiter who foretells to Venus the peace that the rule of Augustus is to bring to the Roman world:

hunc tu olim caelo, spoliis Orientis onustum,
accipies secura; vocabitur hic quoque votis.
Aspera tum positis mitescunt saecula bellis;
cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus
iura dabunt; dirae ferro et compagibus artis
claudentur Belli portae;[3]

Anchises, speaking as a prophet from the lower world, names Augustus as the founder of a golden age:

hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis
Augustus Caesar, Divi genus, aurea condet

1 Aen., I.286-288
2 Aen., V.568-569
3 Aen., I.289-294

saecula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva
Saturno quondam.[1]

In an age when the Roman thrilled with pride in her vast empire, when the Roman eagles flashed in lands unknown to the simple husbandman of the early republic, the achievements of Augustus in the East stirred the imagination as a manifestation of her power to subdue the most distant nations of the earth. Anchises prophesies that the nations will tremble at the coming of Caesar:

huius in adventum iam nunc et Caspia regna
responsis horrent divom et Maeotia tellus,
et septemgemini turbant trepida ostia Nili.[2]

Augustus, who received the submission of various barbarous peoples, is compared to Hercules who destroyed monsters in many different parts of the world:

nec vero Alcides tantum telluris obivit,
fixerit aeripedem cervam licet, aut Erymanthi
pacarit nemora, et Lernam tremefecerit arcu;[3]

Anchises promises that he is to conquer nations beyond the farthest known to man:

iacet extra sidera tellus,
extra anni solisque vias, ubi caelifer Atlas
Axem umero torquet stellis ardentibus aptum.[4]

1 Aen. VI.791-794
2 Aen. VI.798-800
3 Aen. VI.801-803
4 Aen. VI.795-797

Latinus learns from the oracle that the descendants of Aeneas will found an empire which shall extend to the limits of the earth:

> Externi venient generi, qui sanguine nostrum
> nomen in astra ferant quorumque a stirpe nepotes
> omnia sub pedibus, qua Sol utrumque recurrens
> aspicit Oceanum, vertique regique videbunt.[1]

The empire founded by the Julian family will be as permanent as rock:

> dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum
> accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.[2]

On the centre of the shield that Vulcan made for Aeneas at the request of Venus, the battle of Actium is pictured in minute detail:

> In medio classis aeratas, Actia bella,
> cernere erat, totumque instructo Marte videres
> fervere Leucaten quroque effulgere fluctus.
> Hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar
> cum patribus populoque, penatibus et magnis dis,
> stans celsa in puppi; geminas cui tempora flammas
> lata vomunt patriumque aperitur vertice sidus.[3]

There is also a reference to the three triumphs, which, according to Suetonius, Augustus celebrated on three succesive days for victories in Dalmatia, at Actiam, and at Alexandria:

1 Aen., VII.98-101
2 Aen., IX.448-449
3 Aen., VIII.675-681

> At Caesar, triplici invectus Romana triumpho
> Moenia, dis Italis votum inmortale sacrabat,
> maxmuma tercentum totam delubra per urbem.
> Laetitia ludisque viae plausuque fremebant;
> omnibus in templis matrum chorus, omnibus arae,
> ante aras terram caesi stravere iuvenci.[1]

Dio, Suetonius, and Augustus, himself, on the Monumentum Ancyranum, all mention the closing of the Temple of Janus thrice during the reign of Augustus.[2] Dio says that of the many honors that were offered to Augustus in 29 B.C., the one which pleased him most was the closing by the Senate of the gates of Janus, implying that all their wars had entirely ceased. It is to this event that Vergil refers when Jupiter tells Venus of the concord that will reign when Augustus shall cause the civil wars to cease:

> cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus
> iura dabunt; dirae ferro et compagibus artis
> claudentur Belli portae;[3]

And Apollo tells Ascanius of the peace that his descendants will bring to the world:

> Iure omnia bella
> gente sub Assaraci fato ventura resident,
> nec te Troia capit.[4]

1 Aen., VIII.714-719
Suet., Aug., Ch.22
2 Dio, LI.20; Suet., Aug., 22
3 Aen.,I.292-294
4 Aen.,IX.643-644

As a compliment to Augustus, Vergil tries to dignify and explain some of the rites and customs which Augustus was anxious to revive, by assigning to them the authority of ancient usage. Helenus warns Aeneas to be careful to cover his head when he offers sacrifice after landing on the promised shores, a custom which was distinctly Roman, for it was the Greek practice to leave the head uncovered:

> purpureo velare comas adopertus amictu,
> ne qua inter sanctos ignes in honore deorum
> hostilis facies occurrat et omnia turbet.
> hunc socii morem sacrorum, hunc ipse teneto,
> hac casti maneant in religione nepotes.[1]

Dio and Suetonius mention the temple of Apollo, which Augustus had built on the Palatine in 28 B.C., and to which Vergil makes a reference in the following lines:

> Actius haec cernens arcum tendebat Apollo
> desuper: omnis eo terrore Aegyptus et Indi
> omnis Arabs, omnes vertebant terga Sabaei.[2]

Under the base of the statue in this temple, Augustus had placed the Sibylline books, which were held in great honor by the Romans. This is probably the allusion in these words addressed by Aeneas to the Cumaean Sibyl:

1 Aen. III.405-409
2 Aen. VIII.704-706; Dio LIII.I

tum Phoebo et Triviae solido de marmore templum
instituam, festosque dies de nomine Phoebi,
te quoque magna manent regnis penetralia nostris
hic ego namque tuas sortes arcanaque fata,
dicta meae genti, ponam lectosque sacrabo,
alma, viros.[1]

As a compliment to Augustus, Vergil finds an ancient precedent for the games which Augustus instituted in honor of the battle of Actium, in the games which the followers of Aeneas celebrated when they landed on the shores of Actium:

Ergo insperata tandem tellure potiti
lustramurque Iovi votisque incendimus aras
Actiaque Iacis celebramus litora ludis.[2]

The game of Troy, which Augustus included among the contests at the consecration of the temple of Julius, and at the dedication of the theatre named after Marcellus,[3] was of Trojan origin and was performed by Ascanius during the funeral games in honor of Anchises:

Hunc morem cursus atque haec certamina primus
Ascanius, Longam muris cum cingeret Albam,
rettulit, et priscos docuit celebrare Latinos,
quo puer ipse modo, secum quo Troia pubes;
Albani docuere suos; hinc maxima porro
accepit Roma, et patrium servavit honorem;
Troiaque nunc pueri, Troianum dicitur agmen.[4]

1 Aen.VI.69-74
2 Aen. III.278-280
4 ~~Aen.V.596-602~~ Aen. V. 596-602
3 Dio., LI.22; LIV.26

The crown of oak which, according to Dio, Augustus was given the right to display before his door to symbolize the savior of the city,[1] was worn as an honor by the heroes of ancient Rome, whom Anchises points out as the descendants of Aeneas:

> Qui iuvenes! quantas ostentant, aspice, vires,
> atque umbrata gerunt civili tempora quercu![1]

In these lines addressed by Aeneas to Andromache, there is an allusion to the founding of Nicopolis by Augustus:

> Si quando Thybrim vicinaque Thybridis arva
> intraro gentique meae data moenia cernam,
> cognatas urbes olim populosque propinquos,
> Epiro, Hesperia, quibus idem Dardanus auctor
> atque idem casus, unam faciemus utramque
> Troiam animis; maneat nostros ea cura nepotes.[2]

Suetonius, in the Life of Vergil, relates that when Augustus was away on his Cantabrian campaign, he demanded in entreating letters that Vergil send him something from the Aeneid. But it was not until long afterwards, when the material was finally in shape, that Vergil read to him the second, fourth, and sixth books. The last of these produced a remarkable effect upon Octavia, for when he reached the verses about her son, "Thou shalt be Marcellus", she fainted and was with difficulty revived.[3]

1. Dio LIII.16.4

1 Aen., VI.771-772
2 Aen., III.500-505
3 Suet., Vita,31-33

Suetonius says that Vergil determined to go to Greece and Asia, and to spend three years there, devoting his time to the sole work of improving the Aeneid; but when he met Augustus at Athens, he resolved to return with the Princeps. In the course of a visit to the neighboring town of Megora in a very hot sun, Vergil was taken with a fever and died at Brundisium.[1] At the request of Augustus, Varius published the Aeneid, making only a few slight corrections, and even leaving the incomplete lines just as they were.

HORACE AND AUGUSTUS

Horace, like Vergil, was born in a country district, and all his life retained a love for the quiet and simplicity of country life. Although he was by nature more fond of companionship than Vergil, his devotion to intellectual interests, and poor health caused him to spend the later years of his life in retirement. He found enjoyment as an observer of men and events rather than as an active participant in the turmoil of political life.

Suetonius says that Horace served as tribunus

1 Suet., Vita, 35

militum under Brutus at Philippi, an experience to which he humorously refers in terms not at all flattering to himself;

> Tecum Philippos et celerem fugam
> sensi, relicta non bene parmula,
> cum fracta virtus et minaces
> turpe solum tetigere mento.[1]

In the amnesty granted by Octavian after the battle, he was allowed to return to Rome, and was given a position as clerk in the quaestor's office. During the following years, Horace experienced the anxiety and indecision which so many of the finer intellects of his day must have suffered. Should he cling to the ideals of a cause now lost, or should he adopt the cause which reason seemed to prescribe? In the first book of the Satires he gives vent to the bitterness of disappointment in vehement personal satire. Except for a rather slighting reference to Caesar (Octavian) in connection with Tigellius, in the third satire, there is no evidence of interest in public affairs or persons.

In the sixteenth Epode, probably the earliest of his political poems, Horace pictures with youthful ardor the ruin that civil wars are bringing to the state which, invincible before the attacks of a Porsena, a Spartacus, or a Hannibal, is wasting away because of the

1 Odes, II.7.9-12

conflict of Roman against Roman. The only remedy he can suggest is that good men flee to some strange land where they can begin life anew, away from the disheartening strife that is corrupting the state. The seventh Epode, probably written at the outbreak of hostilities between the triumvirs and Sextus Pompeius, is similar to the sixteenth in the note of despair. "Has too little blood been spilled on land and sea, and is the Roman state to fall by its own might, to satisfy the desires of the Parthians?" Rome is a victim of angry fates:

> Sic est; acerba fata Romanos agunt
> scelusque fraternae necis,
> ut immerentis fluxit in terram Remi
> sacer nepotibus cruor.[1]

The first Epode, written when Maecenas was about to go to meet Octavian at Brundisium, before Actium, expresses Horace's anxiety for the safety of his patron, and his willingness to suffer every danger with him; there is no sentiment of devotion to Caesar. But in the ninth Epode, written after the battle of Actium, in 31 B.C., there is a decided change of tone. Horace asks Maecenas when he can celebrate with him the glorious victory of Caesar, who is soon to be honored by a triumph as a greater general than Marius or Africanus:

1 Epode 7.17-20

Io Triumphe, nec Jugurthino parem
bello reportasti ducem
neque Africanum, cui super Carthaginem
virtus sepulcrum condidit.[1]

Ode 37 of the first book is a song of exultation composed when the news of the death of Cleopatra reached Rome. Whether Horace was actually present at the battle of Actium, as Nettleship and others believe, is uncertain; but Horace had at last come to a realization that Octavian was the one man who could save the state in the present crisis. Rome, shaken to her foundations by long years of strife, must fall an easy prey to the enemies threatening her from every side, unless she could regain her strength by the unity and stability that only peace could secure. When time had softened the bitterness of defeat, and when, under the influence of the contact with the leading men of the age, which the patronage of Augustus made it possible for him to enjoy, his judgment matured, he became convinced that stubborn adherence to a lost cause would not be of any benefit to the state; and so he turned to Augustus as the savior sent by fate to bring peace to the Roman world. In the fourteenth Ode of the first book, Horace pictures the condition of the state under the figure of a ship shattered by tempests, but now in more quiet

1 Epode 9.23-26

waters near the shore. The state now at peace, but weakened by conflicts, must be saved from further strife. A similar note is sounded in the Ode which is given the place of honor in the first book after the dedication. By a series of portents, heaven has declared her wrath at the Romans for having shed the blood of their own countrymen, but a messenger from heaven is among us in the person of Caesar, who will save the state from her enemies:

> hic magnos potius triumphos,
> hic ames dici pater atque princeps,
> neu sinas Medos equitare inultos
> te duce, Caesar.[1]

In the twelfth ode of the second book, Horace pleads his inability to celebrate the deeds of Caesar; but in the third book, he appears as the court poet, singing the praises of the victorious conqueror:

> Quo me, Bacche, rapis tui
> plenum? Quae nemora an quos agor in specus
> velox mente nova? Quibus
> antris egregii Caesaris audiar
> aeternum meditans decus
> stellis inserere et consilio Iovis?
> Dicam insigne, recens, adhuc
> indictum ore alio.[2]

1 Odes, I.2.49-52
2 Odes, III.25.1-8

The striking picture of the heroism of Regulus is placed in contrast to the decline of the Roman spirit, which has allowed the disasters suffered at the hands of the Parthians to go so long unavenged. But Augustus, who will add the Britains to the Empire, will subdue the Parthians also, and will revive the glory of Roman arms:

> Caelo tonantem credidimus Iovem
> regnare: praesens divus habebitur
> Augustus adiectis Britannis
> imperio gravibusque Persis.[1]

In an Ode written in honor of Augustus' return in 24 B.C. after a campaign of three years in the West, he pictures the celebration that awaits him, and then describes how he, himself, will honor Caesar who has brought peace and security to the world:

> Hic dies vere mihi festus atras
> eximit curas; ego nec tumultum
> nec mori per vim metuam tenente
> Caesare terras.[2]

The bitter attack of the early Satires has been succeeded by a more mature and serious reflection on the decline of the ancient simplicity and morals. In a series of Odes at the beginning of the third book, Horace appears as a moralist and a censor, supporting the Princeps in his efforts to revive the ancient

1 Odes III.5.1-4
2 Odes III.14.13-16

discipline, to which he gave much attention after he assumed the duties of Censor in 28 B.C. The fifteenth ode of the second book, which may possibly have been written at the request of Augustus, compares the growing extravagance of the present with the spirit of the early Romans, who lived plainly themselves that they might beautify the city. Horace finds the cause of the degeneracy of the times in the neglect of religion.

Delicta maiorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris
aedisque labentis deorum et
foeda nigro simulacra fumo.[1]

The decay of morals and of family life have drained the strength of the state and have left her an easy prey for her enemies:

Fecunda culpae saecula nuptias
primum inquinavere et genus et domos;
hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit.[1]

In the twenty-fourth ode of book three he invokes a savior to put an end to the luxury and licentiousness of the times. He clearly refers to the attempts of Augustus, as censor, to check the social evils of his age both by legislation and by his own example:

1 Odes, III.6.1-4; 17-20

O quisquis volet impias
caedis et rabiem tollere civicam,
si quaeret pater urbium
subscribi statuis, indomitam audeat
refrenare licentiam
clarus post genitis.[1]

In the Odes Horace's enthusiasm rises to such a point that, in the extravagance of his expressions of adulation, he appears to imply the divinity of the Princeps after his death. How are we to interpret this deification of Augustus in the works of Horace? Glover says that, when the utterances of both are weighed, it will be found, perhaps, that Horace has said more and meant less than Vergil.[2] Like Vergil, Horace seems to believe in the existence of some power that controls the affairs of men, which he designates as Jupiter, or Fate, or Fortune. But except as an embellishment of the Odes, he does not speak of the existence of the Olympic deities as a reality, nor does he seem to believe in the existence of a future life. In truth his attitude toward the life after death is pessimistic in the extreme:

nos ubi decidimus
quo pius Aeneas, quo Tullus dives et Ancus,
pulvis et umbra sumus.
Quis scit an adiciant hodiernae crastina summae

1 Odes, III.24.25-30
2 Glover, p.138

tempora di superi?
Cuncta manus avidas fugient heredis, amico
quae dederis animo.
Cum semel occideris et de te splendida Minos
fecerit arbitria,
non, Torquate, genus, non te facundia, non te
restituet pietas.[1]

Horace is a moralist, a censor, who preaches moderation, simple virtue, devotion to friends and country. He seems to regard the established religion as an effective means of teaching these virtues; but it cannot be said that he appears to adhere to any one philosophic school, or to accept the traditional belief in the Olympic deities in its entirety. Like Vergil he feels a profound admiration for the simple faith of the country folk, as a manifestation of the purity of their lives:

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
non sumptuosa blandior hostia
mollivit aversos Penatis
farre pio et saliente mica.[2]

In Augustus, who has brought peace to the world by conquering all Rome's enemies on land and sea, who is striving to make the blessings of peace permanent, by reviving the pristine virtue of the Roman people,

1 Odes IV.7.14-24
2 Odes III.23.17-20

Horace finds the two virtues, iustitia and constantia, by which Pollux, Hercules, and Quirinus, all benefactors of man, have won a place among the immortal gods. Because of this resemblance to the heroes of former days, he pictures Augustus as winning a place in heaven among the gods as a reward for his benefits to man, as they did:

> Hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules
> enisus arcis attigit igneas,
> quos inter Augustus recumbens
> purpureo bibet ore nectar;[1]

Nettleship has a theory that Horace, as a compliment to Augustus is referring to the Pantheon in which Agrippa had wished to place a statue of Augustus.[2] Although the idea of divine honors being granted to the Princeps after death, would cause no great shock to the Roman of this time, since from the time of the apotheosis of Julius the idea had been gaining prominence even in Italy, yet one cannot conceive of Horace accepting the idea literally. The passage must be considered as a specimen of extravagant flattery, which, it must be admitted, is offensive to modern taste.

Horace, like Vergil, pays Augustus the compliment of divine ancestry:

1 Odes III.3.9-12
2 Dio LIII.27

nosque et profestis lucibus et sacris
inter iocosi munera Liberi,
cum prole matronisque nostris
rite deos prius adprecati,
virtute functos more patrum duces
Lydis remixto carmine tibiis
Troiamque et Anchisen et almae
progeniem Veneris canemus.[1]

But it is a noticeable fact, that in the fourth book of the Odes, which, as Suetonius tells us, was composed at the suggestion of the Princeps himself, there is no mention of deification of Augustus, himself, either before or after death.

In other passages of the first three books, Caesar is pictured as a messenger sent from heaven, under the protection of the gods, to perform a great mission:

Gentis humanae pater atque custos,
orte Saturno, tibi cura magni
Caesaris fatis data; tu secundo
Caesare regnes.[2]

As Jupiter is supreme in the heavens, so Caesar rules supreme on earth:

Caelo tonantem credidimus Iovem
regnare: praesens divus habebitur
Augustus adiectis Britannis
imperio gravibusque Persis.[3]

1 Odes IV.15.25-32
2 Odes I.12.49-52
3 Odes III.5.1-4

Augustus has been refreshed and inspired by the muses:

> Vos Caesarem altum, militia simul
> fessas cohortis abdidit oppidis,
> finire quaerentem labores
> Pierio recreatis antro.
> vos lene consilium et datis et dato
> gaudetis, almae.[1]

The goddess Fortuna is invoked to protect Caesar in his expedition to Britain:

> Serves iturum Caesarem in ultimos
> orbis Britannos et iuvenum recens.[2]

Horace's position at court was now well established, and in the year 17 B.C., when the Emperor celebrated the Saecular Games, Horace was asked to write the hymn in honor of the occasion. Suetonius tells us also, that as court poet he was asked to write of the victory of Tiberius and Drusus, and thus he was compelled to add a fourth book to the Odes. In the second ode of the fourth book, evidently written in 16 B.C., in anticipation of the return of Augustus from the German frontier, Horace pleads his inability to sing the praises of Augustus in the manner of a Pindar. In odes four and fourteen, which commemorate the victories of Drusus and Tiberius in 15 B.C., the praise of the young Neros is

1 Odes III.4.37-42
2 Odes I.35.29-30

combined with the compliments paid to Augustus, to whose training their virtues are attributed.

Sensere quid mens rite, quid indoles
nutrita faustis aub penetralibus
posset, quid Augusti paternus
in pueros animus Nerones.[1]

The victory of Tiberius was made possible by the assistance and counsel of Augustus:

te copias, te consilium et tuos
praebente divos.[2]

In the fifth and last Odes of the fourth book, Horace expresses his gratitude to Augustus, and summarizes all the blessings that the rule of Augustus has given to the world--peace, security, prosperity, morality, encouragement of the literary arts:

Tua, Caesar, aetas
fruges et agris rettulit uberes
et signa nostro restituit Iovi
derepta Parthorum superbis
postibus et vacuum duellis
Ianum Quirini clausit et ordinem
rectum evaganti frena licentiae
iniecit emovitque culpas
et veteres revocavit artis,

1 IV.4Odes 25-28
2 IV.14 Odes 33-34

per quas Latinum nomen et Italae
crevere vires famaque et imperi
porrecta maiestas ad ortus
solis ab Hesperio cubili.[1]

Suetonius relates that Augustus after reading certain sermones, was displeased because no mention of him was made, and that in answer to this complaint, Horace wrote the Epistle beginning "cum tot sustineas....". In this Epistle, which discusses the development of poetry and its present condition, Horace asks Augustus to be a patron of the arts. He acknowledges the inability of his muse to do adequate justice to the renown of Caesar:

> Nec sermones ego mallem
> repentes per humum, quam res componere gestas
> terrarumque situs et flumina dicere et arces
> montibus impositas et barbara regna, tuisque
> auspiciis totum confecta duella per orbem,
> claustraque custodem pacis cohibentia Ianum,
> et formidatam Parthis te principe Romam
> si, quantum cuperem possem, quoque; sed neque parvum
> carmen maiestas recipit tua, nec meus audet
> rem tentare pudor, quam vires ferre recusent.[2]

Although Horace, in his sincere gratitude for the blessings which the reign of Augustus had brought

1 Odes IV.15.4-16
2 Ep. II.1.250-259
Epistle

to the state, often uses extravagant language to express his admiration for the accomplishments of the Princeps, the praise is always for the services of ~~the Emperor~~ Augustus to the state, but he remains aloof from more personal flattery. While he fulfilled the demands made of him as poet laureate, he seems to have maintained an attitude of dignified reserve in his relations with Augustus, even refusing, as Suetonius tells us, certain favors which were offered to him.

If we compare the lives of Horace and Vergil as recorded in Suetonius, there appears to be a difference in the attitude of Augustus toward the two poets. He admires Vergil as a poet and enjoys listening to the reading of the Georgics and even asks him to send him something from the Aeneid. With Horace, who was more a man of the world, his relations are less formal; he not only recognizes his poetic ability, but he seeks more intimate companionship with him. In a letter to Maecenas Augustus tells of having offered Horace the post of personal secretary. Even when Horace declined, Augustus did not cease his efforts to gain his friendship. Suetonius adds extracts from letters as a proof of this statement: "Sume tibi aliquid iuris apud me, tamquam si convictor mihi fueris; recte enim et non temere feceris, quoniam id usus mihi tecum esse voluerit, si per valitudinem tuam fieri possit." And again: "Tui qualem habeam

memoriam poteris ex Septimio quoque nostro audire; nam incidit ut illo coram fieret a me tui mentio. Neque enim si tu superbus amicitiam nostram sprevisti, ideo nos quoque ἀνθυπερηφανουμεν." Augustus jocosely describes the appearance of Horace in a letter: "Pertulit ad me Onysius libellum tuum, quem ego ut excusantem, quantulus cumque est, boni consulo. Vereri autem mihi videris ne maiores libelli tui sint, quam ipse es; sed tibi statura deest, corpusculum non deest.--"

CONCLUSION

The attitude of Vergil and Horace toward Augustus was the result not only of personal gratitude for the favors for which they were indebted to him; it was also based on a feeling of sincere admiration for his achievements in bringing to the Roman world peace, moral and social regeneration and prosperity. The patronage of Augustus made it possible for them to enjoy the seclusion of country life which both loved, and in which they found inspiration; it gave them opportunity to experience contact with the leading minds of the day in the social life at court, which was invaluable in perfecting their art. Both men, in common with all the Romans of their day, weary of the endless turmoil into which the wars had plunged the state, honored Augustus as the one man who could bring to the state the peace for which it yearned. And his efforts

to revive the primitive Roman spirit of patriotism, and his personal encouragement of literature, inspired them to sing of the grandeur of Rome, a theme in which they gave expression to the noblest sentiments of their natures. Sainte Beuve declares; "En excitant Vergil a prendre ainsi possession de tout son talent et de toute sa gloire, en discernants, au milieu de ses timidités et de ses rougeurs, son voeu intime et son désire le plus ardent, Auguste a fait un grand acte de gout. La posterité doit lui en savoir un gré immortel."

It is possible that Vergil and Horace may have had another motive in praising Augustus, in addition to gratitude and admiration--the desire to encourage him to higher ideals. In the fifth Philippic Cicero tries to inspire young Octavian to strive for the high ideal he expects him to attain. "Quam ob rem ab eo non modo nihil timere, sed maiora et meliora exspectare debetis neque in eo, qui ad D. Brutum obsidione liberandum profectus sit, timere ne memoria maneat domestici doloris, quae plus apud eum possit quam salus civitatis. Audebo etiam obligare fidem meam, patres conscripti, vobis populoque Romano reique publicaeque; quod profecto, cum me nulla vis cogeret, facere non auderem pertimesceremque in maxima re periculosam opinionem temeritatis. Promitto, recipio, spondeo, patres conscripti, C. Caesarem talem semper fore civem, qualis hodie sit, qualemque eum

maxime velle esse et optare debemus."[1] Cicero felt that this promise did actually have some effect upon Octavian, for in a letter to Brutus he said: "Magis enim illum, pro quo spopondi, quam me ipsum obligavi: nec vero paenitere potest rem publicam me pro eo spopondisse, qui fuit in rebus gerendis cum suo ingenio, tum mea promissione constantior."[2]

Conway and Glover both express the belief that the praise of the poets was an incentive to Augustus. Speaking of the character of Aeneas, Glover says: "The poet draws the largest and most heroic figure he can conceive, and even if in some of its traits it resembles Augustus, it is more truly an ideal for the Emperor to follow than a portrait of what he actually is."[3] And Conway remarks: "And when it is said that Horace and Vergil praised too highly and too soon what Augustus accomplished, let me suggest to you that it would be truer to say that they both dictated and inspired it."[4]

1 Cic. Philip.V.18.51
2 Cic. ad Brutum I.18.3
3 Glover, p.155
4 Conway, p.54

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